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LIBERIA

LAND GOVERNANCE SUPPORT ACTIVITY

QUARTERLY REPORT

FY16, Q1 (OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2015)



JANUARY 2016

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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ADR | Alternative Dispute Resolution |
| CDR | Collaborative Decision Resources Associates |
| CLA | Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting |
| CNDRA | Center for National Documents and Records Agency |
| COP | Chief of Party |
| COR | Contracting Officer's Representative |
| CRL | Community Rights Law |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DCOP | Deputy Chief of Party |
| GOL | Government of Liberia |
| GUC | Grants under Contract |
| HO | Home Office |
| IE | Impact Evaluation |
| LA | Land Authority |
| LAP | Land Administration Project (World Bank) |
| LC | Land Commission |
| LCC | Land Coordination Center |
| LGA | Land Governance Advisor |
| LGSA | Land Governance Support Activity |
| LRL | Land Rights Law |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MEP | Monitoring and Evaluation Plan |
| MLME | Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NGO | Nongovernmental Organization |
| PAC | Project Advisory Committee |
| PPP | Public-Private Partnership |
| SDI | Sustainable Development Institute |

| | |
|-------|---|
| STARR | Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights |
| TBD | To Be Determined |
| TO | Task Order |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| USG | United States Government |
| VGGT | Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security |
| WRI | World Resources Institute |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID/Liberia contracted Tetra Tech as the Prime Contractor to implement the Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights (STARR) Indefinite Quantity Contract. LGSA supports the establishment of more effective land governance systems, ready to implement comprehensive reforms to improve equitable access to land and security of tenure, so as to facilitate inclusive sustained growth and development, ensure peace and security, and provide sustainable management of the environment. Tetra Tech and partners Landesa, World Resources Institute (WRI), Namati, Collaborative Decision Resources Associates (CDR), Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), and Parley form a collaborative team providing technical and organizational assistance to the Government of Liberia (GOL), civil society, and communities in their land rights reform process.

Within 30 days of contract award, a two day work planning and partnering meeting was held in Monrovia, Liberia to review project objectives, clarify roles and relationships to meet project goals and to focus on the development of partnering relationships to ensure successful project implementation. During the second day of meetings, the LGSA team met to discuss finalization of the work plan, focusing on Year 1 activities, but also looking ahead to Year 2 and subsequent years' activities. An inception plan including both the year one work plan and the Monitoring and Evaluation plan was prepared and submitted to USAID for approval.

Throughout the Year 1 work plan, LGSA makes the assumption that the Land Rights Bill and Land Authority Bill would be passed in a timely fashion. Nonetheless a risk analysis and mitigation measures were prepared to highlight possible project implementation constraints.

LGSA embedded the COP within the LC/LA where he spends half of his time providing day-to-day advice and mentorship on direction of the legal framework and general technical assistance. The COP worked with the Land Commission to prepare submissions and to review the content of the discussion on two pieces of legislation (the Land Rights Bill and the Land Authority Bill) currently under consideration by the Legislature. Various other technical specialists from LGSA are partially embedded within the LC/LA.

In December LGSA Consultant John Bruce reviewed the regulatory framework for future work in this area focusing on updating his 2010 study on land reform, completing a review of the processes undertaken by the Land Commission in the development of the current draft legislation, providing an analysis of the status of legal and regulatory review process, suggesting a prioritization of laws and regulatory reforms needed in the future, and identifying possible constraints to this process.

Also in December of 2015, the LGSA in coordination with the Land Commission began the first of a series of public awareness campaigns designed to provide information to the public on the proposed Land Rights Bill and Land Authority Bill. This is discussed at length under Component 4 activities below.

In December, LGSA's organizational development specialists, Ivan Ford (Land Governance Advisor) and Archie Bawo (Land Administration Specialist) began work on the Institutional Reform process. This included a review of recent policies, laws and regulations; development of an institutional map of land governance institutions in Liberia at the national, county, and community levels; a review of the World Bank's draft Assessment of Land Sector Training Needs and Training Plan; consultation with government entities on a transition plan; meetings with legal experts and civil society for input; and began preparation for organizational audits to occur in early 2016

Namati is currently reviewing literature and project implementation experience in community land rights to inform the process for the development of an action research agenda. Namati has also begun work on the creation of a Civil Society Organizations (CSO)/Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) inventory to determine who has been working on land issues at the national, county, and sub-county levels. It is expected that some of these organizations will be able to assist in the community self-identification and mapping exercise in the 45 pilot communities.

In the first quarter, the LGSA team undertook a preliminary publicity campaign to increase public information about the Land Rights Bill and Land Authority Bill and the progress towards getting the legislation passed, giving citizens and community members talking points to meet and discuss with their national and community leaders, and engaging local media institutions to encourage the dissemination of land governance-related information into the public domain.

Administratively, all senior and administrative project staff have been hired. Two technical staff positions remain unfilled (Grants and Subcontracts Specialist and the Community Engagement Specialist (which will be under Namati)). Office space and housing have been secured for COP and DCOP. Financial management and procurement procedures have been established and are functioning. Personnel, vehicle, and security handbooks have been finalized.

I.0 INTRODUCTION

USAID/Liberia contracted Tetra Tech as the Prime Contractor to implement the Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights (STARR) Indefinite Quantity Contract. LGSA supports the establishment of more effective land governance systems, ready to implement comprehensive reforms to improve equitable access to land and security of tenure, so as to facilitate inclusive sustained growth and development, ensure peace and security, and provide sustainable management of the environment.

Tetra Tech and partners Landesa, World Resources Institute (WRI), Namati, Collaborative Decision Resources Associates (CDR), Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), and Parley form a collaborative team providing technical and organizational assistance to the Government of Liberia (GOL), civil society, and communities in their land rights reform process. LGSA is applying USAID's collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) principles through the demand-driven support to the land reform agenda led by the GOL (Component 1); strengthening of land governance human and institutional capacity (Component 2); development of a customary land rights recognition model based on the Land Rights Policy that can be scaled up (Component 3); and support of stakeholder engagement in land governance through communications and outreach and strengthening of local capacity through the provision of land sector services (Component 4). In all project activities, LGSA, through partnership with government and civil society, is developing a focused and results-oriented approach through innovative yet cost-effective tools and best practices.

I.1 WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A two day work planning and partnering meeting with the Land Commission, USAID, Tetra Tech home office staff, Monrovia-based project staff, and all implementing partners took place on Thursday at the Corina Hotel. The first day's meeting initially reviewed the project objectives, but focused on the development of partnering relationships to ensure successful project implementation. During the second day, the LGSA team met to focus on the clarification of roles and relationships to meet project goals and to discuss finalization of the work plan, focusing on year one activities, but also looking ahead to year 2 and subsequent years' activities.

A draft inception plan was prepared and submitted to USAID for comments. This plan included both the year one work plan and the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEP). Comments were received from USAID specifically related to the detailed discussion of the risk analysis and the depth of the monitoring and evaluation criteria proposed. Further details were developed for both segments of the inception plan and a final draft was submitted in November.

I.2 RISK ANALYSIS

Throughout our Year 1 work plan LGSA makes the assumption that the Land Rights Bill and Land Authority Bill would be passed in a timely fashion. The status of the passage of this legislation is dealt with in greater detail under the objective 1 discussion below. The original expectations of passage of the legislation during the extended legislative session in September/October did not occur and all indications are that the legislation will be passed during the new legislative session beginning in January. A factor of concern for the project is the ending of the mandate of the Land Commission (LC) in early January with no establishment of the Land Authority (LA) which will assume the role of the Commission in addition to its other responsibilities. LGSA continues to assume that the LA, once established, will continue to support the scope of the LGSA project. In Table 1.1 below we outline some of the potential risks and how LGSA will mitigate them should they occur. LGSA will monitor these risks, and others as they emerge, through a quarterly review to be included in the quarterly reports. Through project

implementation LGSA staff will have a sense of what to anticipate and when to engage USAID, the GOL, and the PAC in a discussion on implementing mitigation measures.

TABLE 1.1. LGSA IMPLEMENTATION RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES IN ORDER OF PROBABILITY OF OCCURRENCE

| Risk | Mitigation Measure |
|--|--|
| Land Authority Act not promulgated | Collaborate with GOL in identifying alternative institutional arrangements for continuation of land legal reforms and implementation of those policies and laws. Given the end of the Land Commission's mandate GOL will need to identify an alternative institutional home for Land Commission roles and responsibilities. The initial work of the Land Administration Adviser has assessed options for land administration and governance capacity building within the framework of existing institutions. These will be further elaborated if necessary. Once the Land Administration Policy has been presented to GOL, LGSA will support a public information campaign to inform the public of its contents. |
| Lack of institutional home for LGSA following the end of the Land Commission's mandate and the establishment of the Land Authority | LGSA will continue to work with GOL Land Commission staff who have been retained by GOL for the first two months of 2016. The work will focus on monitoring the progress of the legislation through the legislature and assistance in the development of a transition strategy for continuing the work of the Land Commission. |
| Delay in functionality of Land Authority | Increase efforts with transition team by providing additional institutional restructuring expertise. Clarity on the timing of functionality will be necessary to avoid unrealistic expectations on full functionality, necessitating a prioritization of critical areas of effort. Once the transition team is appointed LGSA will provide assistance to the team in the development of the Authority's priorities in terms of critical issues that the Authority will need to immediately address vs. those that can continue to function under current institutions settings prior to the full merging into the Authority structure. |
| Delay in World Bank Land Administration Project (LAP) | Clearly define responsibilities of LAP versus LGSA; adapt flexible approach to respond to technical needs not covered by LAP; maintain open communication with donors and GOL through Land Coordination Working Group. |
| Land Rights Act not promulgated | Continued work with rural communities to develop governance structures to manage access to community land and resources in accordance with the Land Rights Policy adopted by government. Collaborate with CSOs and Land Authority on actionable steps. These would include further public information campaigns for the Land Rights Policy. |
| Declining support of GOL stakeholders | Remain flexible to adapt to changing needs with the demand-driven approach; engage PAC consistently for guidance and communication of LGSA priorities; Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between LGSA, LA, and USAID to detail steps to be taken when there is a change in level and type of support. With any changes in leadership, either at the Land Commission or the Land Authority, comes the potential for a change in support of LGSA objectives. LGSA will work with the current leadership to ensure that a transition plan is in place to support LGSA activities, and engage the PAC as necessary should new leadership not be as supportive. |
| Community input not sufficient in application of Land Rights Law | Engage in community outreach once the Land Rights Law (LRL) passes; hold participatory consultations on content of Land Rights Policy and Law to engage CSOs and communities in implementing regulations and customary land rights recognition process. Continuously monitor community engagement and understanding of options available and resources provided. |
| Key land rights messages not appropriately disseminated | Form partnerships with local organizations/individuals with high social legitimacy to take on community engagement, public education, and outreach roles. Work will focus on media options and CSO/NGO partners. |
| Community land rights activities generate or exacerbate land conflicts | Collaborate with Land Coordination Centers (LCCs) and local dispute resolution entities to analyze risks and establish dispute resolution systems before work begins in the communities; CDR and Parley provide additional dispute resolution training as needed. |
| Customary land rights recognition process more time and resource intensive than anticipated | Share responsibility for implementation of agreed upon land rights process with government, CSOs and communities. Re-evaluate phased and costed customary land rights implementation plan to learn from ongoing experience and modify implementation plan accordingly. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Existing legislative framework for deed registration doesn't adequately support community deed process | Collaborate with the Center for National Documents and Records Agency (CNDRA)/LA to clarify the legal foundation for deeds registration in hopes of simplifying the process. Propose legislative/regulatory reform if appropriate. |
| Re-emergence of Ebola virus | Train staff/counterparts on health and safety measures; restrict activities as necessary. |
| Elections | Presidential elections to be held in 2017 and legislative (House of Representatives and Senate) elections may impact the level of support for land governance. Remain flexible to changing focus of GOL actors. Monitor role of land in campaign dialogue. |

I.2 SUPPORT PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) AND GOL ENGAGEMENT

I.2.1 Establish Project Advisory Committee

No work has been done to establish a project advisory committee to date. The Land Commission has focused its activities on the passage of the Land Authority and thought it premature to establish a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) while expecting an immediate institutional change. Once the Land Authority is established a PAC will be established and begin to participate in project implementation programming. In the absence of the establishment of the Land Authority in the next quarter of the project, a PAC will be formed with representatives from the various Liberian land governance institutions. Similarly there have been no meetings of the consultative working group on land pending the institutional restructuring. The consultative working group on land will be rejuvenated in the coming quarter to assist the Land Authority in coordinating donor engagement in the land sector.

I.3 COMPONENT I: STRENGTHEN POLICY, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR LAND GOVERNANCE

I.3.1 Provide Advisory and Demand Driven Support to Land Policy Development

LGSA has embed the COP within the LC/LA where he spends half of his time providing day-to-day advice and mentorship on direction of the legal framework and general technical assistance. In addition, LGSA technical experts like the Land Governance Advisor and Land Administration Specialist have been located part-time in the LC/LA.

There are two pieces of legislation currently under consideration by the Legislature: The Land Rights Bill (which provides legal authority for the provisions of the adopted Land Rights Policy), and the Land Authority Bill (which consolidates all government land administration and management activities under one entity).

The Land Rights Bill was submitted to the legislature for consideration in July of 2014. However, due to the outbreak of Ebola the planned public hearings, discussion, and enactment of the legislation did not take place as planned. When the legislature reconvened it was strategically determined that the priority legislation was the Land Authority Bill, given the ending mandate of the Land Commission.

The Land Authority Bill was therefore submitted to the Legislature in August 2015. A public hearing was held in late September during an extended period of the Legislature which was not completed due to a lack of understanding of the provisions of the Bill.

Numerous Cabinet working group sessions were held to review both the Land Authority Bill and the Land Rights Bill for resubmission to the Legislature. The COP worked with the Land Commission to prepare submissions and to review the content of the discussion as they were taking place.

I.3.2 Conduct and Disseminate Policy Research and Analysis

In December, LGSA Consultant John Bruce reviewed the regulatory framework for future work in this area. He focused on updating his 2010 study on land reform, completed a review of the processes undertaken by the Land Commission in the development of the current draft legislation, provided an

analysis of the status of legal and regulatory review process, suggested a prioritization of laws and regulatory reforms needed in the future, and identified possible constraints to this process. His work will provide a basis of legal and regulatory reform activities for the Land Authority once it is established.

Dr. Bruce has suggested a prioritization of reform activities as follows:

First order: County land Institutions: (regulations dealing with the appointment, operations and proceedings of the County Land Boards); Customary land: (drafting of detailed guidelines for the implementation of the customary land provisions of the Land Rights Law); Spatial Data Infrastructure and Land Survey Laws; Land Rights Registration: (title registration and deeds registration); and Regulations on Government/Public Land; **Second Order:** Land Use Planning; Informal Occupation and Settlement; and Alternative Land Dispute Resolution; and **Third Order:** Land and Gender Equity and Land Valuation and Real Property Taxation

This prioritization does not suggest an immediate drafting of legislation, as further research may need to take place, a policy task force may need to be established, etc. The utilization of task forces to address a specific policy reform agenda has proven to be a very effective mechanism to engage relevant individuals and institutions in the law and regulatory reform process and is likely to continue to be the mechanism adopted by the Land Authority once it has developed its work plan.

The Land Administration Policy essentially can be seen as the work plan for the new Land Authority.

TABLE 1.2. YEAR 1 ROAD MAP FOR POLICY AND LEGAL REFORM

| Legal Reform | Status and Next Steps | Short-to-Medium-Term Impacts | Anticipated Reform Timeframe |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|
| Land Authority Act | Under review by legislature; once passed, public outreach, guidelines for implementation | Establishment of LA; streamlined approach to land governance; cohesion among GOL partners | Q1 – Q4 |
| Land Rights Act | Under review by legislature; once passed, public outreach, guidelines for implementation | Formal recognition of customary land tenure; public awareness of land rights improved | Q2 – Q4 |
| Regulations on the County Land Board and County Land Team | Workshops and task force to develop regulations in consultation with county level stakeholders | Establish functionality of County Land Boards as provided in the Law establishing the Land Authority | Q2-Q4 |
| Regulations under Land Rights Law | Not yet begun; begin consultations and drafting after Land Rights Act promulgated. Undertake action research on issues surrounding community self-identification and delimitation of community land resources | Enables demarcating and registering customary land; establishment of community land and management associations | Q3 – Q10 |
| Land Survey Act | Creation of a task force to determine the provisions of the survey act within the context of Liberia needs and international standards | Reform of survey profession in Liberia | Q2-Q6 |
| Regulations under Land Authority Law | Not yet begun; begin consultations and drafting after Land Authority Act promulgated | Procedures for making applications to LA; codes of conduct established | Q3 – Q10 |
| Land Rights Registration | Establishment of a task force to explore the feasibility of a single land rights registration act that would cover both deed and title registration and provide for the registration of customary rights. | Strengthen the process of land rights registration, clarifying issue of title vs. deeds registration and ensuring a mechanism for the registration of customary land rights. | Q3-Q6 |
| Regulations on the sale, lease, and concessions of public and government land | Establish a task force to develop these regulations with broad public consultation | Clarification of the process for transparency in the alienation of public and government land | Q3-Q8 |

| Legal Reform | Status and Next Steps | Short-to-Medium-Term Impacts | Anticipated Reform Timeframe |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|
| Amendments to harmonize policies and laws | Harmonize Land Rights Act's customary land provisions with Community Rights Law (CRL); Land Administration Policy provisions with legislation; and regulations related to survey, land valuation, and taxation | Harmonized legal framework; fewer misinterpretations of policies, law, regulations | Ongoing over life of project |
| Draft policies and laws related to land tenure | Ongoing review and comment on draft policies and laws related to land tenure (e.g. mining, decentralization, environmental protection, and forestry) | Policies, laws and regulations streamlined across sectors; less confusion in implementation | Ongoing over life of project |

I.3.3 Develop and Disseminate Public Information on Proposed Reforms

In October and November, LGSA worked with the Land Commission to develop a series of newspaper articles focused on the pending legislation and a review of the activities of the Land Commission. These articles were submitted by the Land Commission for publication.

In December, the LGSA, in coordination with the Land Commission began the first of a series of public awareness campaigns designed to provide information to the public on the proposed Land Rights Bill and Land Authority Bill. This is discussed at length under Component 4 below.

I.4 COMPONENT 2: IMPROVE HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR LAND GOVERNANCE

I.4.1 Support Master's-Level Training of GOL Land Governance Institutions

No work has been done on this component pending the establishment of the Land Authority and the completion of an institutional audit. Both activities are expected to be completed during the next quarter.

I.4.2 Support Decentralized Management and Institutional Capacity Development

In December, LGSA's organizational development specialists, Ivan Ford, the LGA, and Archie Bawo Land Administration Specialist began work on the Institutional Reform process. Mr. Ford's work was somewhat handicapped by the illness of Mr. Bawo who was unable to be functionally present during much of Ivan's consultancy. Nonetheless the consultancy completed the tasks assigned: 1) Review recent policies, laws and regulations (Land Rights Act, Land Authority Act, and Land Administration Policy) prior to arriving in country; 2) Develop an institutional map of land governance institutions in Liberia at the national, county, and community levels; 3) Review the World Bank's draft Assessment of Land Sector Training Needs and Training Plan; 4) Consult with the Land Commission and other Government of Liberia authorities, such as the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy, CNDRA, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Works, Civil Service Commission, and Ministry of Labor, to solicit feedback on transition plan; 5) Meet with Liberian legal experts and civil society for input; 6) Review and draft an initial Land Authority transition plan for feedback; 7) Incorporate input from Land Commission, Government of Liberia partners, partners, and civil society; 8) Prepare for organizational audits to occur in early 2016; and 9) Work with John Bruce to design institutional transition workshop for January.

The consultancy was planned with the expectation that the Land Authority Bill would have passed the legislature and the Land Authority would have been established. Nonetheless Mr. Ford, in anticipation of the passing of the Land Authority Bill, (and being cognizant of the need for land governance reform regardless of the results of the Land Authority Bill vote), prepared a draft Terms of Reference for a

Transition Team, a draft Scope of Work for an Institutional Audit, and a draft program for a Stakeholder Workshop.

1.4.3 Increase Awareness and Capacity of GOL Land Governance Institutions

Shortly after the Land Commission was established a week long orientation program was completed which provided the Commissioners and staff with key information and theoretical perspectives on the areas identified in the Liberia land program. The objectives of that retreat were to 1) ensure that Commissioners have a common body of knowledge regarding land tenure issues; 2) get Commissioners to work as a group, with one voice; 3) identify key issues that need to be addressed; and 4) develop a preliminary work plan. All participants in that workshop have indicated that it was a critical first step for the functioning of the Land Commission.

LGSA is proposing to undertake a similar exercise once the Land Authority is established and the transition team appointed. The focal participants will be members of the transition team, but will also include institutional and donor representatives, members of the NGO/CSO community, and land related professionals as appropriate. The workshop will be coordinated by Ivan Ford, but also include Jon Bruce and Sam Durham, an institutional reform specialist that assisted the Lesotho government in the establishment of their Land Agency. The objective of this training program will be to increase awareness within the institutions impacted by the establishment of the LA on the principles and guidelines for responsible land governance and the implications of the Land Rights Policy and Land Rights Law. This will serve as an opportunity to address concerns that individuals or institutions may have on the new laws or the LA itself. LGSA partners will provide input on the design of the participatory training and on the incorporation of women's land rights, customary tenure, and dispute resolution, among other subject areas.

1.4.4 Develop Business Plan for Liberia Land Authority, Support Institutional Transition, and Establish Management Systems for Sustainability

No work has been done on this activity pending the establishment of the Land Authority and clarification of division of resources provided by LGSA and the forthcoming World Bank Land Administration project.

1.4.5 Support Public Outreach and Awareness

Public outreach around the establishment of the Land Authority will begin once the institution is fully established.

COMPONENT 3: CONDUCT ACTION RESEARCH SUPPORTING LAND RIGHTS POLICY

The Land Rights Policy defines four major land categories: public, government, customary, and private. Under the proposed Land Rights Act customary lands are statutorily recognized as equal to private land. Recognition of customary lands requires communities to self-identify members (including women, youth, and minorities), demarcate boundaries, and constitute representative land governance entities. Rural communities are keenly interested in obtaining a deed to customary land, but policymakers and rural communities alike are unaware of the extent and location of deeded lands, tribal certificates, concessions, and other government and public lands. LGSA will support the GOL to develop a process for the recognition of customary lands which will in turn inform the design of new laws, regulations, administrative procedures, and guidelines to implement the Land Rights Policy and Land Rights Law.

Namati is currently reviewing literature and project implementation experience in community land rights to inform the process for the development of an action research agenda. It has become quite clear to the Land Commission that there is a dearth of information on the status of land rights in rural Liberia. The Land Commission is in the process of completing an inventory of tribal certificates which will assist them

in future work with communities for the recognition of customary land. The LGSA COP has been working with the Commission to assist in the analysis of the data being produced by this exercise.

Namati has also begun work on the creation of a CSO/NGO inventory to determine who has been working on land issues at the national, county, and sub-county levels. It is expected that some of these organizations will be able to assist in the community self-identification and mapping exercise in the 45 pilot communities.

I.6 COMPONENT 4: STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY, PRIVATE SECTOR, AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN LAND GOVERNANCE

I.6.1 Design and Implement Public Information Campaigns

Under Component 4, the LGSA inception plan outlines the plan to strengthen citizen engagement through a public education and outreach plan “around the Land Rights Policy principles, demand for enactment of land laws and regulations, and awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the new LA.” In the first quarter the LGSA team determined that while awaiting the passage of the Land Rights Bill and the Land Authority Bill, it would be important to develop a strong public awareness campaign in order to disseminate information and increase education on land issues and the pending bills in order to show how the bills will benefit the citizens of Liberia. Keeping in mind the possibility that the bills may not pass in their current form or in a timely manner, messages were created to cover basic information around land rights in order to make people aware of the current Land Rights Policy and what the GOL is doing to address land issues as well as keep communities engaged with these issues. The objectives of the campaign were:

1. To increase public information about the Land Rights Bill and Land Authority Bill and the progress towards getting the legislation passed;
2. To give citizens and community members talking/discussion points to meet and discuss with their national and community leaders;
3. To engage local media institutions and encourage the dissemination of land governance-related information into the public domain.

The campaign covered seven counties: Montserrado, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, Bong, Nimba and Sinoe, and lasted for a period of ten days. Together with the Land Commission, a short skit was recorded in key Liberian languages including simple English, Kpelle, Bassa, Kru, Gio, Gola, Lorma, Mano, Mandingo, Mende and Vai. The skit outlined information on the pending Land Rights Bill and the basic functions of the legislation. Additionally, the following four key messages on land matters were produced on 5000 stickers and distributed and posted on private and public facilities, vehicles, motorbikes, and other widely seen areas during the campaign. (*See attached Annex D for samples*):

- *All Liberians Have the Right to Own Land*
- *Don't Fight for Land / We Can Talk to Resolve Problems*
- *Selling the Same Piece of Land to Two or More People is a Crime*
- *Don't Buy Land in Secret*

A four-member team comprised of Richlue O. BURPHY, (LGSA Communications and Outreach Specialist), Prince Tucker (LGSA Driver), Arthur Tucker (Land Commission Communications Specialist), and Jerry Siakor (Land Commission Special Assistant to Commissioner for Outreach and Communications) was sent to the field to undertake the awareness raising activities. In each county the team met with government and community leaders as well as other key stakeholders. The campaign made use of personnel within the existing Land Coordinating Centers (LCC) in four of the selected seven counties to help with the monitoring of the messages and to support distribution of the information.

Radio was determined to be the most effective channel for communication during this rapid campaign. Recordings of the skit were distributed to 13 community radio stations, the national Liberia Broadcasting

Station, and one national urban station. The recordings were broadcasted in simple or Liberian English as well as the widely spoken local dialects and were played several times a day over the course of 20-25 days. Stickers imprinted with the key messages were distributed in the communities to reinforce the radio messages.

The information targeted all sectors of the communities including women, youth groups, farmers, local leaders, and other land owners including those that are contemplating acquiring land of their own. Broader targets included members of the national legislature, academic institutions, civil society groups, local government structures, marketing associations, farming organizations and concessions, donor agencies, and the general public.

Getting communities involved in the campaign helped to show the role they can play in ensuring their rights are protected. While the stickers were being distributed, the team often encountered community residents that were anxious to ask questions on land issues affecting them. Some examples of questions asked were:

- What are the steps in acquiring land?
- What is government doing to reprimand those selling land to more than one person?
- In the event where a piece of land was purchased but due to financial difficulties, the buyer was unable to probate and register the deed, what could be the consequence?
- Can someone purchase land from an estate?
- What was the intent of the tribal certificate inventory?
- What will happen to those who already have Executive Orders as the final stage in obtaining a Public Land Sale Deed?

Concerns were addressed in accordance with the Land Rights Policy. These inquiries and the resulting discussions encouraged engagement on land rights issues and demonstrated communities' continued interest in participating in discussions around the rights and relevant laws.

1.6.3 Strengthen Private Professional Organizations of Surveyors and Land Professionals

Mr. Bawo (LGSA Land Administration Specialist) initiated discussions in early October with the President of the Association of Professional Land Surveyors, Mr. Joseph Burgess, followed by a subsequent meeting with three officials to brief them of the inception of the LGSA, deliver to them the Legal documents of the Association processed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and discuss capacity building needs and the way forward and roles of APLSL in upcoming LGSA activities.

A test has been conducted by the licensing board to applicants who applied for a surveyor's license with ten (10) candidates successfully passed and licensed while six (6) others were placed on probation pending a refresher training to be conducted by the Association.

Follow-up visits and meetings with the Mr. Burgess, President of the Association, outlined a transitional plan which includes:

1. A general meeting at the end of January;
2. Payment of FIG March;
3. A Membership drive beginning in early February, 2016 deadline set for March 15, 2016;
4. Setting up a transitional committee;
5. Updating and publication of licensed surveyors list end of March 2016.

1.6.4 Facilitate Establishment of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

Namati has begun the development of a roster of CSO/NGO entities in Liberia that have experience in the land sector. The engagement of these organizations will be critical for the customary land rights

recognition activities under Component 3. Specific criteria being considered are related to experience and geographical diversity.

Further work will be done to identify and work with professional organizations that could benefit from engagement with LGSA through the undertaking of specific project activities.

I.7 QUARTERLY MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT

As project activities begin, we are heavily engaged in monitoring as planned. During this quarter, two main activities were conducted, quarterly data collection and an impact assessment. These activities were done in coordination with the Land Commission.

I.7.1 Quarterly Data Collection and Validation

Our main purpose of monitoring and controlling activities (through quarterly data collection, review and reporting) is to be proactive in reporting, finding issues ahead of time, and taking corrective action. Corrective action can require revisiting planning and updating the M&E Plan as needed with the ultimate goal of bringing the project back in line with project objectives and constraints and improving future execution.

All six counties with Land Coordination Centers have been visited and data reviewed, corrected where possible, and collected for reporting. At each LCC, all files were reviewed and verified at the community level based on addresses provided of the people that received services. . The process was jointly done with LCC staff in the various counties.

I.7.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Impact Assessments are formal, evidence-based procedures that are presently being used to assess the Land Commission's work using the mediation procedures in six counties. LGSA's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist, and the Land Commission's M&E Officer carried out the assessment. The assessments will assist in planning future programs. The following procedures were followed;

1. Planning of the IA
2. Carrying out the impact analysis (quantitative analysis (desk review) and qualitative analysis (focus group discussion and key informant interview)
3. Consultation of affected stakeholders and the general public (Including GOL officials and traditional leaders)
4. Coordination with Land Coordination Centers and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Practitioners
5. Summary and presentation of findings in a report
6. Forwarding findings to decision makers

The LGSA has visited the 6 piloted site counties and will complete the final visits and findings in the coming quarters.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TRACKER

| Name of Indicator | Baseline data | LOP Target | Year 1. Target | Y1,Q.1 Achievement | Percent of Achievement | Remark |
|---|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1.1: Number of specific pieces of legislation or implementing regulations proposed, adopted, and/or implemented affecting property rights of the urban and rural poor as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by laws/ regulations and stage). | 0 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1.2: Number of public consultations held regarding proposed policy, legal and regulatory reforms | 0 | 36 | 6 | 0 | 0% | |
| 1.3: Number of individuals trained in land tenure and property rights as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by sex and by type of training). | 0 | 1900 | 200 | 0 | 0% | |
| 2.1: Number of land administration and service entities, offices, or other related facilities that the project technically or physically establishes or upgrades as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by established/ up graded, technically/physically supported, and county/national). | 0 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 100% | Provision of support to land commission for internet service, impact assessment, and the purchase of a printer Targets for indicator may be revised in future MEPs |
| 2.2: Number of individual seeking land administration services (disaggregated by type of services e.g. Land conflict resolution, registration of deeds, etc.) | 0 | TBD | TBA | 75 | | These are all land conflict matters brought to LCCs for resolution (Males (51), Females (24) marginalized (35 (46.6%)also in the total) (Nimba Males 3, females 0, Bong males 4, females 2, Margibi males 2, females 1, Maryland males 2, females 0 and Montserrado males 33, females 17) |

| Name of Indicator | Baseline data | LOP Target | Year 1. Target | Y1,Q.1 Achievement | Percent of Achievement | Remark |
|--|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 2.3: Number of individuals from land governance institutions who received Master's-degrees in land administration and governance as a result of USG support. Disaggregated by sex and type of master studies. | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | | |
| 2.4: Number of land transactions completed (e.g. property registry, depute resolved and etc.) | 0 | TBD | TBA | 1 | | Land conflict resolved |
| 3.1: % of adults in pilot areas who report that their land tenure rights are secure (disaggregated by sex, age category, and location). | 0 | TBD | TBA | 0 | | |
| 3.2 Number of communities with relevant parcel information corrected or newly incorporated into an official land administration system (whether a system for the property registry, cadaster, or an integrated system) as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by parcels corrected or newly incorporated) | 0 | 40 | 0 | 0 | | |
| 3.3: Number of households or organizations with formalized land rights as a result of USG assistance (disaggregate by household, community, commercial, other). | 0 | TBD | TBA | 0 | | |
| 3.4: Number of disputed land and property rights cases resolved by local authorities, contractors, mediators or courts as a result of USG assistance | 0 | TBD | TBD | 0 | | |

| Name of Indicator | Baseline data | LOP Target | Year 1. Target | Y1,Q.I Achievement | Percent of Achievement | Remark |
|--|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|--|
| (disaggregated by type of disputes and types of resolution method used). | | | | | | |
| 3.5: % of Community governance entities implementing rules for the inclusion of women and youth | 0 | 90% | 0 | 0 | | |
| 4.1: Number of outreach materials on land tenure and property rights distributed through USG assistance. (disaggregated by type of material) | 0 | 68 | 8 | 2 | 25% | Stickers and land rights jingles on CDs were printed, produced and distributed to 7 counties. |
| 4.2: Number of public outreach activities on land tenure and property rights held with USG assistance (disaggregated by type of activity, county and national) | 0 | 450 | 50 | 2 | 4% | Airing of jingles to 15 radio stations and the distribution of stickers to 7 counties |
| 4.3: Number of new or existing private professional organizations of surveyors and other land related professions supported(Disaggregated by new vs. existing and by type of support) | 0 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 0% | |
| 4.4: Number of marginalized people (women, youths, disabled and etc.) who have access for service in land tenure and property rights from land governance institutions. (Disaggregated by sex and geographical locations) | 0 | 225 | 25 | 27 | 108% | Females (24) Disabled (0) Youths (11). Targets for indicator may be revised in future MEPS. |
| 4.4: Number of NGO's and CSO's engaged in land tenure and property rights | 0 | 25 | 5 | 0 | 0% | |

| Name of Indicator | Baseline data | LOP Target | Year 1. Target | Y1,Q.1 Achievement | Percent of Achievement | Remark |
|--|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------|
| campaigns (Disaggregated by national, county or local) | | | | | | |

2.0 LGSA ADMINISTRATION

2.1 MOBILIZATION OF COP AND DCOP:

In September, LGSA initiated a rapid start-up that began with the mobilization of a team that included LGSA Project Managers David Felson and Megan Huth within a month from contract signing. Dr. Mark Marquardt arrived in Liberia on September 8 as the LGSA Chief of Party (COP), with Ms. Zyck Baggett following on September 16, to take her position as LGSA Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP). The LGSA Office Manager, Malinda Coleman-Woods, was already in Liberia at this time working in the same capacity for the UNDP-funded SESA project and was able to transition directly into the LGSA project and assist with project start-up.

2.2 OFFICE:

Initially a temporary office space was located for the first month and a half on Cheeseman Avenue in Sinkor, while the team continued the search for a permanent space that was within budget and would meet the needs of the project. After viewing nine possible office locations, a site at 18th and Warner Streets in Sinkor was selected, the former office of FHI 360's Liberia Teacher Training Project office. The LGSA team moved into the permanent office space in December of the first quarter.

The LGSA COP spends the majority of his time at the Land Commission as they are the primary partner on the LGSA project. The COP comes to the LGSA office every morning and afternoon to address administrative issues and communicate with the Tetra Tech home office. The LGSA DCOP is primarily located in the LGSA office.

2.3 PERSONNEL:

At start up, LGSA staff was comprised of the following:

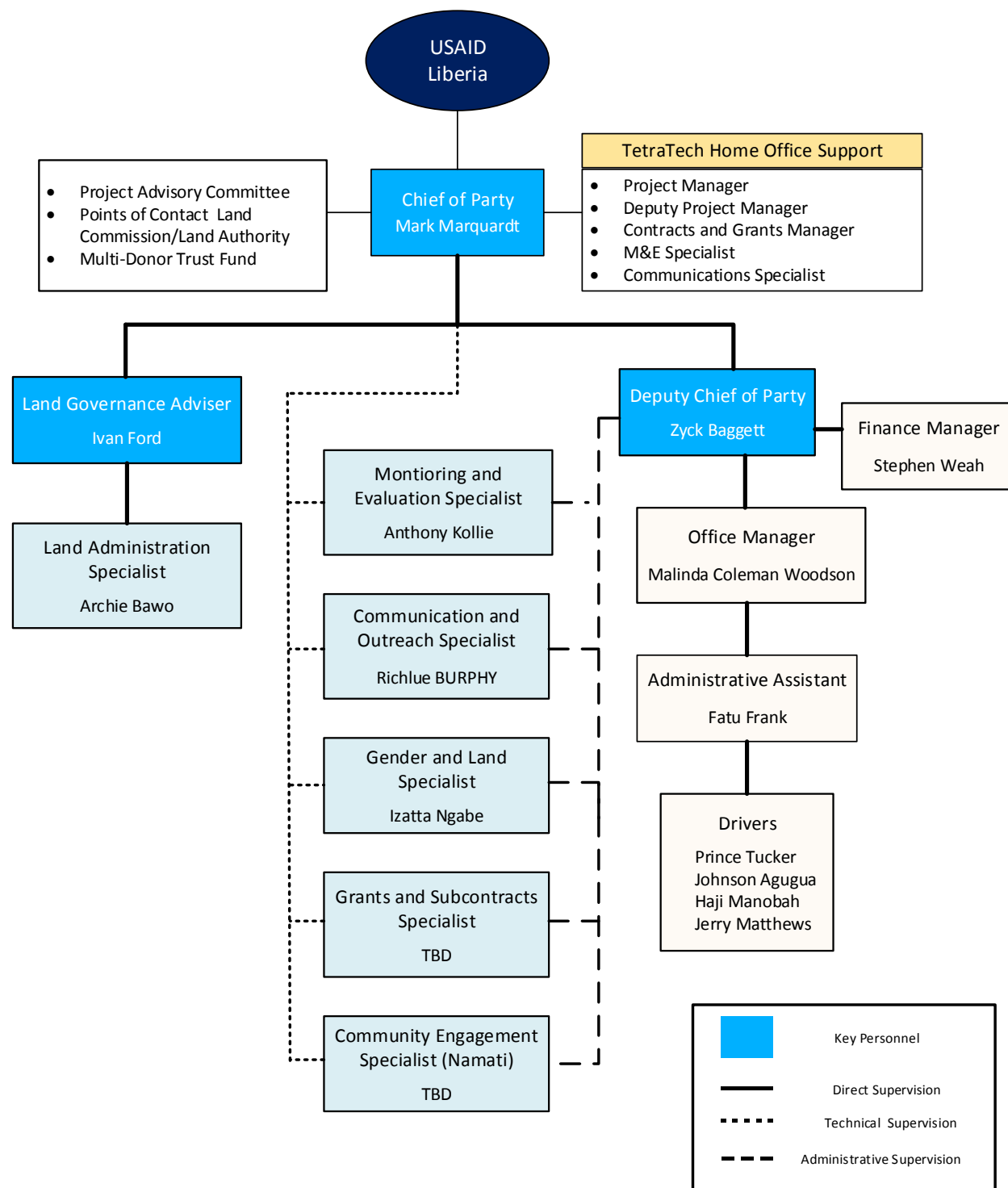
- COP: Mark Marquardt
- DCOP: Zyck Baggett
- Office Manager: Malinda Coleman-Woodson
- M&E Specialist: Anthony Kollie
- Finance Manager: Stephen Weah
- Land Administration Specialist: Archie Bawo

During the quarter advertisements were placed and recruitment commenced for an Administrative Assistant, a Communications and Outreach Specialist, a Gender Specialist and four drivers. Interviews were held and candidates were selected and hired as follows:

- Administrative Assistant – Fatu Frank
- Communications and Outreach Specialist – Richlue BURPHY
- Gender Specialist – Izatta Nagbe
- Driver – Johnson Aguagua
- Driver – Prince Tucker
- Driver – Manobah Hadji
- Driver – Jerry Matthews

An ad was also placed for the Grant Management Specialist and the Community Engagement Specialist, with interviews and final selection to be held during the beginning of Quarter 2.

LGSA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



2.4 PROCUREMENT:

General start-up activities took place including the full procurement process for office furniture, equipment including computers and phones, and general supplies. USAID approved the transfer to the LGSA project of office furniture and two generators from FHI 360's LTTP project. In addition LGSA received four vehicles from the NGO Global Communities per USAID's direction. These equipment transfers provided significant savings to the LGSA project budget. Additional security, internet, and networking services were also procured following USAID and Tetra Tech procurement policies and guidelines.

A master inventory list for LGSA is maintained with monthly reports submitted to the Tetra Tech home office detailing the equipment purchased and received by the project each month.

2.5 FINANCE:

Our Finance Manager, Stephen Weah, is responsible for the LGSA financial reporting, along with the Tetra Tech home office. Accounting is done with QuickBooks and all reports and receipts are uploaded and submitted monthly to the home office. An account was opened with Ecobank with the following signatories:

- Mark Marquardt: COP
- Zyck Baggett: DCOP

2.6 POLICY DOCUMENTS:

The LGSA start-up team developed an Employee Handbook for all LGSA staff. This document includes information on the project's Per Diem, communications, security, and other policies. The Employee Handbook also lists official Tetra Tech holidays, project equipment/computer policy, work attendance regulations, employee benefits/allowances, and vehicle use policies. The handbook along with employee contracts were reviewed by a local lawyer to ensure all policies comply with Liberian law.

2.7 OTHER:

In addition the COP and DCOP spent considerable time during the quarter seeking personal housing locations that met USAID requirements and were within the final approved allowance limits. Both the COP and DCOP have located housing within the Sinkor area and are within close proximity to the LGSA office and the current site of the Land Commission. Residency permits were also secured for the COP and DCOP during this quarter. Research is ongoing to find a permanent residence for LGSA consultant Ivan Ford.

A weekly conference call has also been established between the COP, DCOP and the Tetra Tech home office team. Any issues that require attention are discussed and action items.

The LGSA office was fully operational at the end of Quarter 1.

ANNEX A: SUCCESS STORY



USAID | LIBERIA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Proposed New Land Law Excites Liberians

Liberian vendor putting land rights message on her market



Photo: Richlue O. BURPHY/USAID LGSA

Fatu, as she puts the sticker distributed from the LGSA and Land Commission outreach team on her drink cooler with the message so that all her customers would see.

"I want everyone that buys from me to see this message that 'all Liberians have the right to own land'. Maybe it will help reduce the plenty palaver."

- Fatu Leah, Bomi Small
Business Owner

For more information contact:
USAID/Liberia COR Daryl Veal at
dveal@usaid.gov
LGSA Chief of Party Mark Marquardt at
mark.marquardt@tetratech.com

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Land rights in Liberia have been surrounded by an unstable environment due to a lack of clearly defined policies and laws. Liberia's land administration and management system involves formal institutions and customary traditions that provide a complex landscape that is difficult to navigate and provides little guidance to citizens. As a result, in mid-2010 the Liberia Land Commission established a land policy working group comprising key government ministries and agencies, to review the policy, legal and regulatory framework in Liberia. In February 2012, the Land Commission constituted a Land Administration Task Force to focus on the institutional arrangement for land administration and recommend options for reforming and improving the land administration system in Liberia.

A Land Rights Policy was formally accepted by the government in May 2013. The Commission presented to the President of Liberia; H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a draft Land Authority Bill, which would create a dedicated government body for land governance, and which has subsequently been submitted to the National Legislature for their consideration and passage into law. In addition, a draft Land Rights Bill is currently under consideration by government.

In short order, the USAID Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) has begun a series of public outreach campaigns to inform the public of the provisions of these proposed laws, thereby assisting the Liberian government in the establishment of more effective land governance systems. In December 2015, staff from the Land Commission and LGSA together visited 7 of Liberia's 15 counties engaging national and community leaders, including chiefs, mayors, magistrates, lawmakers as well as the media, community-based organizations, and local residents, circulating information about the proposed Land Rights Law and the benefits to Liberians. The team also listened to feedback from the communities.

Local residents including small vendors, or petty traders as they are known in rural Liberia, who are mostly women are excited about having new land laws that will protect their land rights. Fatu Leah, a trader in Bomi County, shared, "land business here makes me seriously scared, especially when I see the people holding cutlasses and other weapons fighting for land. People are really desperate for land business that is why I am happy about this law. When it come, I really be happy. Maybe that's the time I will start thinking about buying my own land."

ANNEX B: PROJECT BRIEF



USAID | LIBERIA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA)



Land cases to be mediated using alternative dispute resolution method

SNAPSHOT

Life of Project:

August 2015-August 2020

Target: People of Liberia

Focus Counties: Countrywide

Goal: Support to Liberia Land Reform Process and Land Governance Institutions

Implementing Partner:

Tetra Tech
Mark Marquardt
Chief of Party
18th and Warner
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Tel: +231-880-700748
Email: Mark.Marquardt@tetratech.com

Additional Partners:

Collaborative Decisions Resources (CDR)
Landesa
Namati
Parley
Sustainable Development Initiatives (SDI)

USAID Contact:

Daryl Veal, COR
Tel: +231 777-465879
Email: dveal@usaid.gov

Project Overview

USAID Liberia Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) supports the establishment of more effective land governance systems to implement comprehensive reforms to: improve equitable access to land and security of tenure for all, facilitate inclusive sustained growth and development, ensure peace and security, and provide sustainable management of the environment.

Current Activities

LGSA is comprised of four components that address the above issues through gender sensitive approaches:

Component 1: Strengthen the policy, legal and regulatory framework for land governance. Activities include:

- Providing advisory support and recommendations for land policy and legal and regulatory reform,
- Developing and disseminating public information on proposed reforms, and
- Conducting and disseminating policy research.

Component 2: Improvement of human and institutional capacity for land governance. Activities include:

- Supporting institutional transition to the Liberia Land Authority,
- Supporting decentralized management and institutional capacity development, and awareness of Government of Liberia land governance institutions,
- Supporting master's-level training in land governance, and
- Public outreach and awareness campaigns

Component 3: Conduct action research to support provisions of the land rights policy and land rights law. Activities include:

- Developing a learning agenda followed by the development and field testing of processes for customary land rights implementation,
- Facilitating community-led processes to strengthen community land governance, including capacity building of communities, local institutions, and stakeholders.

Component 4: Strengthen civil society, private sector, and citizen engagement in land governance. Activities include

- Developing and managing grants under contract supporting civil society and private sector entities engaged in land governance activities, and
- Assisting the strengthening of private professional organizations, and facilitating the establishment of public-private partnerships in activities surrounding land administration.

Created February 2016

ANNEX C: MEDIA

Land Related Press Clippings

1. **Chief Justice Acknowledges Arbitration Strategy – LC Boss (Daily Observer, December 3, 2015)**

The story quotes the Land Commission (LC) Chairman as saying the Chief Justice has acknowledged the LC's arbitration strategy for resolving land disputes as fruitful. The chairman noted that the LC has taken up some judicial functions to resolve land cases thereby reducing court dockets. This story was published by the Daily Observer on December 3, 2015

Link: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201512031618.html>

2. **Next Session's Focus: Security Sector, Land Authority Acts (Daily Observer, December 8, 2015)**

This story covers a meeting between outgoing US Ambassador to Liberia Deborah Malac and Liberian Senate Pro Tempore Armah Jallah. During the meeting, President Pro Tempore of the Senate has informed outgoing United States Ambassador to Liberia that the next session of the Senate will prioritize the legislation of two very important Acts, including the security sector and the Land Authority. The story was carried by the Daily Observer on December 8, 2015.

Link: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201512080357.html>

3. **Land Dispute Again in Ganta (Published by: The Inquirer, Wednesday, January 6, 2016)**

According to this story, Muslim youth in Ganta disrupted court survey order on a piece of land. The land case has been before the 8th Judicial Circuit court and the court sent surveyors and sheriff to carry on the exercise but as the mosque was among buildings demolished by the road construction exercise, aggrieved youth again cause dispute. Land disputes are many in Ganta.

4. **The Importance of the Proposed Land Rights Act (Published by: Daily Observer, Friday, November 27, 2015)**

This is a featured article about the proposed Land Rights Act outlining some of the importance that act would bring to the Liberian people through the Land Reform Agenda. It talks about several aspects of the proposed law.

5. **LC Chair Brandy Calls for Speedy Passage of the Land Authority Act (Published by: Daily Observer, Friday, November 27, 2015)**

In this story, the Land Commission (LC) Chairman calls on the National Legislature to see reasons to pass the Land Rights Act into law. He called on lawmakers to see the practical reality and pass the law that was submitted to them by the President. He said the act is one of the best pieces of legislation. He cautioned that illegal surveyors and others are taking advantage of the delay and causing more damage.

6. **Communities Worry Over Delays in Passage of customary Land Rights Act (Published by: Daily Observer, Friday, November 27, 2015)**

In this story, Civil Society Working Group calls for speedy passage of the Land Rights Act. According to the group, the delay in passing the act is hindering communities' ability to effectively protect and manage their customary land. The group leader urged the National Legislature to pass the law.

ANNEX D: PUBLIC AWARENESS MESSAGES



Motorbike driver displaying LGSA Motorbike driver displaying LGSA public awareness campaign message on land rights and law.

ANNEX E: PROJECT STAFF

Present Tetra Tech staff associated with the project are:

| NAME | POSITION | E-MAIL ADDRESS |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| NAME | POSITION | E-MAIL ADDRESS |
| Megan Huth | Home Office Project Manager | megan.huth@tetrattech.com |
| David Felson | Home Office Deputy Project Manager | david.felson@tetrattech.com |
| Mark Marquardt | Chief of Party | mark.marquardt@tetrattech.com |
| Zyck Baggett | Deputy Chief of Party | zyck.baggett@tetrattech.com |
| Archie Bawo | Land Administration Specialist | Archie.Bawo@liberialgsa.org |
| Anthony Kollie | Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist | Anthony.kollie@liberialgsa.org |
| Richlue BURPHY | Communications and Outreach Specialist | Richlue.burphy@liberialgsa.org |
| Izatta Nagbe | Gender Specialist | Izatta.nagbe@liberialgsa.org |
| Malinda Coleman-Woodson | Office Manager | Malinda.coleman-woodson@liberialgsa.org |
| Stephen Weah | Finance Manager | Stephen.weah@liberialgsa.org |
| Fatu Frank | Administrative Assistant | Fatu.frank@liberialgsa.org |
| Prince Tucker | Driver | Prince.tucker@liberialgsa.org |

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